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S E C R E T ABU DHABI 00406

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ACTION: POL  
INFO: PAO DAO DCM MEPI USLO P/M ECON RSO AMB

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MJSISON  
DRAFTED: POL:JMAYBURY  
CLEARED: A/DCM:OJOHN, USLO:RSIMM

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7886  
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INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1337  
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 4775  
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASH DC  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J-5//  
RUEAHQA/OSAF WASHDC//IA//  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ1/CCJ2//  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ3/CCJ4/CCJ5//  
RUEASRT/COMUSARCENT FT MCPHERSON GA  
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RHRMABM/COMUSNAVCENT MANAMA BAHRAIN  
RUHJBSA/COMUSMARCENT CAMP SMITH HI  
RUEADWD/HQDA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC  
RULSSAK/NAVY IPO WASHINGTON DC  
RUEADWD/HQDA WASHINGTON DC//DALO-SA//  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 ABU DHABI 000406

SIPDIS

STATE FOR PM, MEA, NEA/ARPI  
SECDEF FOR OSD, OUSD (P)  
ISLAMABAD FOR DEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/15/2015  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#) [AF](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: INAUGURAL U.S.-UNITED ARAB EMIRATES JOINT MILITARY  
COMMISSION HELD

REF: ABU DHABI 72

Classified By: Ambassador Michele J. Sison, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (S) Summary: Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Peter W. Rodman and newly appointed and promoted UAE Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al Rumaithy co-chaired the inaugural U.S.-UAE Joint Military Commission in Abu Dhabi January 11-12. During the deliberations, each side reaffirmed the desire to enhance the military-to-military relationship and resolve any differences that could impede progress. The U.S. and the UAE also agreed that Sunnis should participate in the upcoming Iraqi elections, and vowed

to work toward stability in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both expressed strong concerns about Iran,s meddling in Iraq and its threat to the Gulf region. The UAE did not wish to discuss the Defense Cooperation Agreement at the JMC, preferring to raise it directly with the Embassy at a later date, according to Lt. General Hamad Thani. ASD Rodman encouraged Lt. General Hamad Thani to follow up with a letter outlining how the UAE would like to proceed in dealing with the DCA. Discussions in subcommittees touched on a wide array of subjects, including cooperation in military operations, exercises, training, equipment acquisition and releasability, as well as counterterrorism, money laundering, and law enforcement cooperation. End Summary.

¶2. (S) U.S.-UAE military cooperation: In the plenary session, ASD Rodman underscored the importance of the bilateral US-UAE military-to-military relationship, stating that the U.S. goal was to support its friends. He praised the UAE for its stability and leadership, and called it a leader in modernization and moderation in the Middle East. He cited the UAE,s support for President Bush,s initiative for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, its commitment to the Global War on Terrorism, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, and its willingness to provide access, basing and overflight rights. The U.S. has a stake in the UAE,s success, and the military relationship plays an important role in ensuring that the UAE remains strong, he added. ASD Rodman said he hoped the relationship would deepen and that there would be more engagement. He told his hosts that the JMC was a forum to discuss the relationship,s positive aspects as well as mutual concerns. He said he wanted to make sure the relationship was &secure against dangers.8

¶3. (S) Iraq: ASD Rodman said the U.S. appreciated the UAE,s support for the Iraqi people, including its pledge to forgive most of Iraq,s debt. He said the U.S. and the UAE have the same objectives in Iraq. President Bush is fully committed to &finishing the job8 in Iraq, and not abandoning the Iraqi people, he continued. The U.S. believes the overwhelming majority of Iraqis want the political process to unfold, even though extremists, who make up a &minority of a minority8 in Iraq, are determined to destroy this process, ASD Rodman said. Sunnis need to accept that they will not dominate Iraq the way they did in the past, but they should participate in the upcoming election, particularly with Shi,a and Kurd assurances that the future political system will be open to Sunnis, he said. The alternative, he warned, is a suicidal civil war. ASD Rodman said the U.S. appreciates the role and influence of our Arab friends in Iraq.

¶4. (S) Lt. General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al Rumaithy said that Iraq,s Sunnis would join the process eventually. He also said that the UAE did not want to see a divided Iraq, and it was still afraid of a civil war.

¶5. (S) Iran: ASD Rodman said that the U.S. regards Iran as a threat, citing its meddling in Afghanistan and Iraq, and its support of terrorism and radicalism in the region. He stated that the internal situation in Iran is worsening with hardliners asserting greater control. The U.S. remains skeptical about EU-3 efforts to win Iran,s cooperation with the international community on its nuclear program, he added. The U.S. is convinced Iran will cheat and do whatever it can get away with. ASD Rodman said he does not expect any warming of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Iran. He told UAE military officials that the U.S. stands with the UAE on a strong policy in dealing with Iran.

¶6. (S) Lt. General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al Rumaithy replied that Iraq has become more dangerous because of Iran,s attempts to export its revolution. He said the UAE and Iran are neighbors and should have an understanding between them, but instead Iran is not sending any positive signals to the UAE on how to resolve the dispute over the three UAE islands that Iran occupies militarily. He agreed with ASD Rodman that the Iranians eventually would cheat when it comes to their nuclear program rather than cooperate with the

international community. Brigadier General Essa Al Mazrouie, head of the Directorate for Military Intelligence, said his agency shares U.S. concerns posed by Iran's threat to the region, and concurred that Iran remains determined to develop nuclear weapons.

¶7. (C) Global war on terror and cooperation: ASD Rodman said that extremists wanted to destroy what everyone else values. He described the war on terror not as a war of civilizations, but as a war of extremists against the civilized world.

¶8. (C) Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI): ASD Rodman urged the UAEG to endorse the principles of President Bush's PSI and to consider participation in future PSI activities. He said the UAE is a natural participant given its geography and strategic security concerns. ASD Rodman emphasized that PSI activities are voluntary and do not infringe on a country's sovereignty. Recalling that the U.S. already has suggested to the UAE that the two countries conclude a PSI Shipboarding Agreement, ASD Rodman said that such an agreement would be a way to cooperate on WMD proliferation, & one of the growing dangers that affect us all.8

¶9. (S) Defense Cooperation Agreement: In the Executive Session, ASD Rodman offered to discuss the DCA, but Lt. General Hamad Thani said the UAE would raise the issue directly with the Embassy at a later time. ASD Rodman said that our bilateral cooperation, which has a great potential to grow, has a great vulnerability if this issue is not resolved, it is not sufficient to deal with incidents ad hoc at a political level. He noted that the U.S. has operational DCAs with Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar and issues are handled in a routine fashion. ASD Rodman said there were DoD legal experts at the JMC prepared to address the issues. ASD Rodman underscored that the U.S. has very limited flexibility to change its position given its legal and regulatory framework. The present situation adds an element of risk we do not need to have as we work together on these important issues. Lt. General Hamad Thani said he was very familiar with the DCA's issues of jurisdiction. He said that the two sides & could cooperate better.8

#### Follow-up discussions

¶10. (S) In addition to the DCA, the two sides will follow up on several other military and political-military issues. A more comprehensive analysis of many of these issues can be found in reftel.

-- Afghanistan reconstruction: The UAE has expressed interest in participating in the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT).

-- Base Operating Arrangement: Although this issue was not discussed at the JMC, Post understands that the BOA is being worked in Washington, and it is the Embassy's hope that a text will be forwarded to the UAE in the next couple of weeks.

-- ATACMS: We continue to receive mixed signals on the future of this program. MBZ and his staff have indicated it is too expensive and they are not currently considering a purchase. The UAE Land Forces Commander, Major General Saeed Al Rumaithy, also believes the price is too high but insists on discussing the issue with visiting senior U.S. personnel. Major General Saeed has also expressed strong distaste for the end-use monitoring provisions of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding, which remains dormant.

-- Communication interoperability: UAE asked for additional discussions (following the Command and Control Interoperability Board in October 2004) on Link 11 and Link 16 platform requirements related to U.S.-UAE tactical air data link interoperability.

-- Aircraft clearances: The UAE has had difficulties in obtaining clearances for its aircraft flying into Afghanistan and Iraq.

-- Airspace violations: The UAE is unhappy with periodic U.S. aircraft violations of its airspace.

11. (U) ASD Rodman has reviewed and approved this cable.  
SISON